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ABSTRACT

A study of the status of the instruction of incarcerated aliens in English as a second language (ESL) was undertaken to learn what is known about the subject and to determine whether incarcerated aliens have unique learning problems associated with their status as foreign nationals. Information was gathered through interviews with professionals in the field. Their experience suggests that in this group, the only negative factor in English acquisition uniquely tied to their immigration status is an enhanced anxiety level resulting from the threat of deportation or uncertainty of detainment, and from their position as underdogs in the inmate society. Other negative factors, including retention of ethnic attachments and economic disincentives, also affect foreign nationals but are not unique to them. The negative factors are offset by powerful factors promoting acquisition of English; specifically, the need to survive both physically and economically in the criminal justice system and economic incentives. There have been virtually no attempts to define or measure success of ESL instruction with specific regard to incarcerated aliens. (Author/MSE)

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TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TO INCARCERATED ALIENS

by

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Report submitted to Dr. DeLorenzo in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

I recommend that this paper be accepted as a seminar paper required for the Master of Education degree.

Professor directing seminar paper	Date
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Adelaide Edelson
November, 1984

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper was to learn what is known about teaching English as a second language to incarcerated aliens, and determine whether they have unique learning problems associated with their status as foreign nationals.

In the absence of a body of literature on this subject, the researcher contacted and developed primary sources of information, principally through telephone interviews. The experience of professionals in the field tends to establish that the only negative factor in English acquisition by incarcerated aliens uniquely tied to their immigration status is an enhanced anxiety level resulting from the threat of deportation or uncertainty of detainment, and from their position as underdogs in inmate society. Other negative factors, including retention of ethnic attachments and economic disincentives, also affect foreign nationals but are not unique to them. The negative factors are offset by powerful factors promoting acquisition of English, specifically, the need to survive, both physically and emotionally in the criminal justice system, and economic incentives. There have been virtually no attempts to define or measure success of ESL instruction with specific regard to incarcerated aliens.

RATIONALE

A critical debate about immigration policy is in progress in America today. The first major reform bill in a generation failed of passage because of congressional inability to reconcile sharply diverging viewpoints. All agreed, however, that the nation faced serious problems.

The primary stimulus for change is concern about the impact on our economy and society of the great increase in the number of aliens entering the country illegally in the last decade (Alter, 1984). This development has significantly increased the need for provision of social services to the alien population by state and local governments already facing resolute taxpayer resistence to the rising costs of all social services. In addition, it has impacted federal, state, and local correctional institutions because of a corresponding increase in (1) the number of aliens arrested and sentenced for illegal entry, as well as those detained until deportation by the Immigration and Naturalization Service and (2) the number incarcerated after conviction for criminal offenses unrelated to illegal entry.

The last decade has also seen a substantial growth in the size of incarcerated populations, which has strained the security and increased the cost of operating correctional institutions. At the same time, there has been a de-emphasis on 'treatment' or rehabilitation, as opposed to security. The result has been a constraining effect on the relative share of resources committed to the education of incarcerated populations at a time when the need for such education has increased.

These trends, one dealing with the increase in the alien population, the other with the increase in prison population, have combined to (1) increase the number of incarcerated aliens, (2) increase the need for English language instruction to speakers of other languages, and (3) limit institutional capacity to meet this need. The need has both institutional and individual origins: the former because institutional security requires that commands be

understood; the latter, because of individual concern for personal safety in a potentially threatening environment and for preparation for life after prison.

Under these circumstances, it would be useful to understand how correctional institutions are responding to the need to teach English to aliens. It appears that little public attention has focussed on this problem. Accordingly, the first step is to identify what is known about the subject, second, determine whether sound assessments have been made of ESL in correctional institutions and, third, where possible, identify the factors which researchers and educators believe are correlated with success.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The expanding prison population in the United States includes an expanding number of aliens, some sentenced and incarcerated for illegal entry, some sentenced and incarcerated for crimes other than illegal entry, and some detained pending further action by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). While in prison, they may take language instruction in various forms.

On the basis of contacts with individuals in the field of correctional education, a review of materials in McKeldin and Hornbake Libraries at the University of Maryland, and a computerized title search through ERIC, a data base compiled under the auspices of the Center for Applied Linguistics at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., the researcher learned that there is a dearth of literature specifically focussing on the language education of incarcerated aliens.

The researcher concluded that an inquiry into factors that may enhance or detract from the effectiveness of such education and that may be unique to incarcerated aliens would prove useful to education officers in the corrections field, to writers and publishers of their training materials, and to public policy officials whose judgments determine the allocation of funds for correctional education.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study addressed the following questions:

(1) Do incarcerated aliens have problems in acquiring language skills, because of their immigration status, that other non-English speaking inmates do not have?

(2) What are these problems?

(3) Is recognition of these problems reflected in methods and techniques used by educators in the correctional field?

(4) What is known about alien inmates' need for instruction, the resources devoted to their instruction, and the results of correctional programming?

ASSUMPTIONS

Research was guided by the following assumptions:

(1) The correlates of success for incarcerated aliens in acquiring English as a second language are (a) immigration status, (b) intensity of ethnic attachment and values, (c) socio-economic level, (d) educational achievement, (e) the teaching methodology used, (f) resources available for the programs, (g) the relative proportion of the aliens to the total inmate population, and (h) the composition and characteristics of the balance of the inmate population.

(2) The inquiry would be useful to corrections educators, developers of educational technology, and those who determine public policy on the allocation of resources for correctional education.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this study, these terms were defined as follows:

ALIENS - All foreign nationals in prisons. These include illegal aliens, foreign nationals who are in the United States legally but have been convicted and sentenced to serve time for a crime committed in the United States, and political refugees who entered asking for asylum and are in prison as "detainees".

ILLEGAL ALIENS - Foreign nationals who are not in the United States legally, either because they entered the country illegally or stayed in the country after their visas (e.g., tourist, student, business) expired.

INCARCERATED - Describes individuals who have been arrested, indicted, tried, convicted, and sentenced for commission of a crime and, as a result, are being held in penal institutions.

DETAINEES - Persons held in penal institutions, but not legally "incarcerated". For example, this term describes Cuban refugees who were incarcerated for the commission of a crime in the United States, served their sentence or were released on parole, and are now "detained" for an indefinite period, pending further proceedings by INS. It has also been used to describe refugees, such as some "boat people" who were not necessarily criminal but were put in prison because they had no place to go. The prison served a custodial function pending placement of the detainees in the community, with the help of interested individuals and social service organizations.

HISPANICS - American and foreign nationals whose mother-tongue is Spanish.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS - Telephone and face-to-face interviews. The abbreviation "p.c." will be used in the "Results of Interviews" section of this paper. The researcher did not ask the interviewees for permission to use their names. Therefore, to protect their confidentiality, they are described in terms of their professional function instead of by name.

LIMITATIONS

There has not hitherto been a basic study of the teaching of ESL in correctional institutions that focusses on incarcerated aliens. Accordingly, this study assumed the character of basic, or primary research. It had to be undertaken without reference to a centrally available and generally accepted set of factual propositions concerning its subject, i.e., what are the dimensions of the problem, what resources are devoted to it, with what goal and with what results? This was not known at the outset. Nevertheless, much was learned. It must be noted that very little of what was stated concerning even such fundamental issues as the number of incarcerated aliens could be verified. It also appears that practitioners are dealing with practical problems in the institutions each day, without the benefit of learning from one another. This lack of "networking", with respect to the matter of aliens, gives an air of improvisation or reinventing the wheel to their separate endeavors.

It is therefore not at all surprising that there is a dearth of objective analysis in the scanty literature about ESL for incarcerated aliens. Most of this paper's comments are based on the subjective, anecdotal impressions of interviewees. Information was derived principally from

interviews conducted between July 16, 1984 and October 17, 1984, principally with correctional personnel. The researcher did not visit any penal institutions and did not personally observe or speak to any alien inmates.

Time and money constraints limited personal and telephone contacts. Therefore, no effort was made to contact corrections personnel of all the prison systems in the United States. As it pertains to the federal system, this paper relies mainly on information furnished by Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBP) employees in the Washington, D.C. headquarters and in prisons in La Tuna, Texas, and Atlanta, Georgia, both of which house a significant number of aliens, and Alderson, West Virginia, the only women's prison, where 10% of the inmate population are potential deportees. As it pertains to state and county institutions, this paper relies mainly on information furnished by correctional staff in New York, New Jersey, and California.

No attempt was made to independently investigate the instruction of non-incarcerated aliens as a basis of comparison with the experience of alien inmates.

The only current available population survey of foreign national inmates in the United States is concededly inadequate and does not meet statistical standards.

PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGY

The researcher made a literature search at the graduate library of the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, and the Center for Applied Linguistics, using card catalogs, government documents, and the ERIC system.

Letters were sent to the Directors of Correctional Education in ten states identified in the Congressional Record (p. H 6130) as possibly incarcerating significant numbers of alien inmates. A copy of the letter is contained in the appendix of this paper.

The researcher interviewed in person and by telephone 37 individuals identified as potential sources of information about teaching ESL to incarcerated aliens. They included administrators, teachers, psychologists, attorneys, statisticians, and officials of the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The researcher did not follow a detailed interview guide but developed ideas as the personal contacts accumulated. Therefore, there was no uniformity of questions posed or answered. Each source shared some experiences in the hope they would add a useful insight to the paper.

Overall, questions fell into broad categories dealing with population data, educational needs, programs offered, funding/resources, motivational factors, methodology, and measurements of success.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The researcher was unable to find information on language instruction to incarcerated aliens in publications accessible through library card catalogs, criminology reference materials, or the ERIC system. Therefore, information was obtained from individuals, primarily corrections personnel, through the materials they furnished and through oral interviews. Documents acquired deal principally with inmate population data, course offerings, and the legal foundations for alien inmates' educational rights or lack thereof.

Data on Foreign Inmate Population

The rate of inmate population growth in the prisons in the United States has been described as "truly astounding" (Conyers, 1984). State and federal prisons housed a total of 438,830 inmates at the end of 1983, which represents nearly a doubling in the last decade (Carlson, 1984). By June 30, 1984, this figure had increased to 454,136 ("Jail Population", 1984).

A separate phenomenon is the rapid increase in the number of illegal aliens coming into the United States (Barrientos, et. al., 1979, p. 1; 1982, p. 1), as well as the number of foreign nationals who would otherwise be deported but, due to political circumstances, are incarcerated or detained in American prisons.

The conflux of these trends has resulted in an increase of foreign nationals in the prison population.

The most precise data on foreign inmates comes from the federal prison system. The Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBP) (Inmate Profile Report, 1984), reports a total sentenced population of 28,692 (excluding detentioners) in federal prisons, of which 3,094 or 10.78% are foreign nationals (pp. 15-17). Of this group, 46% or 1.434 inmates are serving time solely for immigration law violations (p. 8). The balance were sentenced for felonies exclusive of illegal entry or stay. Apart from FBP reports, population data about alien inmates is elusive and, when obtained, frequently inadequate.

The most extensive survey ever undertaken will be conducted under the auspices of the National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, some time in 1985, to learn about literacy programs in state prisons, identify model programs where they exist, and develop a guide for implementing literacy programs in prisons. There will be identification of non-English

speaking populations in every state (Annual Program Plan, pp. 4-5). In the course of identifying the needs of non-English-speaking inmates, there may be identification of foreign nationals. Until the Office of Management and Budget approves the survey instrument, it is not possible to identify the survey questions or establish what information will be collected specifically about foreign nationals.

Meanwhile, the only current effort to survey the numbers and nationalities of foreign nationals in all United States correctional facilities, including federal and state institutions, was prepared in April 1983 by a private, non-profit criminal justice information clearinghouse (International Legal Defense Counsel). Nine of the 50 states as well as the FBP did not respond to the survey. Of the 41 states that did respond, several could not supply the requested data, or could not distinguish between foreign born and foreign nationals. The numbers that were reported totalled 3,577, according to the tally of this researcher. Characterizations of the "foreign" inmate population ranged from negligible to significant, with the largest number located in New York, followed by Florida, Texas, New Jersey, and Virginia. Although the inmates' nationalities ranged from Micronesian to Danish, the predominant mother-tongue was Spanish. As an indication of the unreliability of the newsletter survey, it showed 144 foreign nationals incarcerated in New Mexico, whereas the New Mexico Corrections Department, in a letter addressed to this researcher (September 25, 1984), stated that only 22 individuals (1% of its inmate population) were aliens.

New York State is trying to identify its foreign inmates for policy and operational purposes, and especially to seek reimbursement for costs from the federal government (Congressional Record, H 6129-31). In May 1984, the New York State Department of Correctional Services issued the results of a two-part survey to present the profile of foreign-born inmates in custody as of that date and the trend in foreign-born committments for 1978-1982 (Grossman, et. al., 1984). During 1978-1982, their number increased nearly 240%, from 350 to 838, due to a dramatic rise in committments from Caribbean, South American, and Central American countries. The figure given for foreign-born inmates in custody as of May 1984 had increased further to 1,230, out of a total of 31,568 inmates. The information was limited by the self-report nature of the data, the tendency of some prisoners to falsely claim to be American-born, and the lack of valid data on immigration status. There are no figures available for the numbers of either "foreign-born" or foreign nationals in city and county facilities, where the average stay is comparatively short and where educational programs are non-existent or severely truncated.

New Jersey, which appears to be representative of the majority of states, does not attempt to maintain inmate statistics on the basis of immigration status. To the extent it tries to identify an inmate population on the basis of a language and culture other than English, it concentrates on a group identified as "Hispanics". The New Jersey Office of Educational Services, New Jersey Department of Corrections, identified over 10% of the adult inmate population as Hispanics (New Jersey, Hispanic Programming, p. 1). It is clear from the literature emanating from New Jersey that

Spanish-speaking foreign nationals are labeled "Hispanic" for purposes of identifying inmate needs (Lee, 1977, p. 12; Aguero, 1981). The term "Hispanics" is also used by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, which reported that from 1974-1979, the number of Hispanic prisoners in state prisons doubled and in 1979 represented 9% of all state prisoners (BJS Bulletin, 1982, p. 1). None of the state sources queried, with the exception of New York and New Mexico, had resources to devote to identifying aliens as such, or believed that such an effort would yield data useful to the prison authorities. New York, as noted above, saw a potential financial benefit, if legislation were enacted that would require the federal government to reimburse the states for the cost of incarcerating aliens.

The "La Tuna" Studies

It is difficult to obtain population data concerning incarcerated aliens. In addition, there is, with the following exception, a dearth of literature on their educational needs. Beginning in 1979, psychologists and educational psychologists associated with the University of Texas at El Paso, undertook a unique series of studies at La Tuna, Texas, a federal institution with a substantial number of aliens, mostly from Mexico. These studies consist of four reports, currently unpublished, prepared for the Federal Bureau of Prisons. One of the reports is being prepared for journal publication. Referred to collectively as "The La Tuna Papers" and listed in the Bibliography of this paper, they represent an effort to identify the personal motivations of inmates convicted of illegal entry and of more serious crimes; to contribute to the understanding of the illegal alien who is incarcerated in a federal prison; to provide an empirically based

foundation for a program of education and training for illegal border-crossers from Mexico; and to examine the impact of such education and training on the post-prison lives of selected individuals who now reside in Mexico.

According to these reports, a 1973 official survey commissioned by the government of Mexico to obtain demographic data about the illegal border-crosser, revealed that of 2,794 such individuals, 22.81% were illiterate, and 91.5% had no knowledge of English (Barrientos, 1979, p. 25). A 1975 study of 1,091 Mexican nationals here as illegal alien workers showed that the average educational level of an illegal Mexican worker was 4.9 years, and 78% could not speak English (Barrientos, 1979, p. iv). The contractors or "coyotes" who recruit able-bodied males for illegal labor, usually get individuals with a rural background and 0-3 years of formal education (Hamilton, 1982, p. 12). Although inmates incarcerated for crimes other than illegal entry had higher scores in verbal, numerical, and spatial aptitude than inmates incarcerated solely for illegal entry, both groups had mean aptitude scores below the average standardized scores for Hispanics in the United States (Barrientos, 1984, p. 31, citing Barrientos, 1982, p. 38). These reports portray a population of inmates and potential inmates with little or no English fluency, and marginal literacy skills in Spanish.

According to interviews with Mexican inmates and ex-inmates, in many instances incarceration amounts to an upward mobility program. The process of learning English helps broaden personal perspectives and develops the inmates' confidence in their ability to learn in a formal education setting

(Hamilton, 1982, p. 24). Selected follow-ups revealed that upon release and deportation to Mexico, some illegal aliens, capitalizing on skills and increased self-confidence acquired in American prisons, with specific reference to the acquisition of English, moved permanently away from the agricultural fields and into the middle class (Hamilton, 1982, pp. 19-24).

The "La Tuna" studies established that the Mexican illegal border-crossers, who have a powerful work ethic and strong family committments, also have a guest-worker mentality, i.e., they saw themselves in cultural and emotional terms as Mexicans, rather than as emigrants to the United States. If Mexico afforded them the same job opportunities and ability to support their families that they seek in the United States, a significant number would remain in Mexico (Hamilton, 1982, p. 9; Barrientos, 1984, pp. 28-29).

The Cubans in Atlanta Federal Penitentiary

To date, there is nothing comparable to the "La Tuna" studies with regard to the Cuban detainees in Atlanta. The following concepts and legal references are useful in understanding their situation.

Foreign nationals who come to the United States must present themselves for inspection at recognized ports of entry with visas and passports, as required. Failure to enter in this manner constitutes illegal entry. The so-called "boat people" or "Marielos", named for the Cuban port from which they sailed, stepped ashore as illegal entrants and were "excludable" and "deportable" under the provisions of sections 1182 and 1252, respectively, of title 8 of the United States Code.

Practically speaking, however, INS could not deport them to Cuba because Castro would not receive them. Therefore, they were detained at the will of the Attorney-General under the custody of INS, pursuant to 8 U.S.C. 1252(a)(1). Following an INS screening process, some Cubans were sponsored into the community and released on conditional parole.

If members of the paroled group committed crimes in the United States, they went through the American criminal justice system and were incarcerated in appropriate penal institutions. Upon release, INS picked them up and placed them in federal prisons. Eventually, they were consolidated in the Atlanta penitentiary, where they now constitute a group of approximately 1,400 detainees. They are not "incarcerated" because they have already served sentences for crimes committed in the United States, but they are detained at the will of the Attorney-General for having violated their conditional parole.

As the result of litigation filed on their behalf with regard to the constitutionality of their conditions of confinement (Loe v. Smith), the United States Government and Legal Aid Services signed a Memorandum of Understanding. It provided for a range of services and educational offerings from first grade through college, including ESL, and specifying full-time ESL instructors.

Today, Atlanta has a bilingual teaching staff. Their work is outlined in an ESL syllabus (U.S. Department of Justice, Atlanta, 1983). It describes the Education Department as an English Language and Cultural Education Center for Cuban detainees. The goal is to teach inmates to function as useful aliens upon release, acquaint them with American customs and heritage,

and instill personal discipline to function in a free, as opposed to a totalitarian society (Syllabus, 1983, Introduction). The ESL syllabus shows the sequence of courses offered and lists all the texts used in the classroom. The texts cover a range of ESL materials commonly used for students in the civilian population, e.g., New Horizons, Modern American English, the Lado series, and the Dixson series (Syllabus, 1983, ESL Resource Index, pp. 1-4).

Federal Prisons - General

Historically, the FBP has advocated programs geared to the needs of Spanish-speaking prisoners. Ten years ago, the present head of the Education Staff, FBP, stated her belief that Spanish-speaking prisoners, including aliens, had unique problems requiring special attention (McCollum, 1974). Pursuant to regulatory requirements an inmate in a federal prison who cannot function at a 6th grade academic level must attend an adult basic education program (ABE) for 90 calendar days. These requirements also apply to non-English speaking inmates who function below the 6th grade academic level in their native language.

The most significant number falling into this category speak Spanish, and they take ABE in Spanish. Non-English speaking inmates who function at an academic level of 6.0 and above in their native language are not required to participate in the ABE program, but are "encouraged to participate in the ESL program" (emphasis supplied) (U.S. Department of Justice Program Statement on ABE, p. 21).

The only foreign nationals exempt from the mandatory requirements are sentenced aliens with a deportation detainer. Other sentenced aliens are expected to participate in the ABE program (p. 22). Whether on an optional or mandatory basis, all federal inmates including those under deportation detainers, have an equal opportunity to avail themselves of ABE and ESL.

Inmates in State Institutions

At the state level, most jurisdictions do not mandate education in any form, because there is no legal basis for them to do so (e.g., Newman, 1977, p. 292). Where educational programs are offered, administrators and educators do not attempt to identify or differentiate between students on the basis of the inmates' immigration status.

A substantial body of literature, developed as the result of work in the New Jersey correctional system, addresses the needs of a population broadly described as "Hispanics", including both American and foreign nationals whose mother-tongue is Spanish. The literature is based on the belief that it is important for everyone working in the criminal justice system, whether it be attorney, guard, or teacher, to be aware of cultural differences between Hispanics and non-Hispanics and the way Hispanics deal with being incarcerated.

Robert Joe Lee, an official of the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts, has written extensively on Hispanic prisoners in the course of working on a state correctional masterplan, projects involving bilingual probation officers, the experiences of Hispanic individuals in the courts, and an evaluation of Spanish-speaking interpreters in the courts. Maggie Aguero, Ombudsman for the New Jersey Department of Corrections, has written

a master's thesis as a follow-up to the work of Lee, and a report for the Commissioner of Corrections. Their work is listed in the Bibliography of this paper.

Both Lee (1976, p. vi) and Aguero (1981, p. 17) advise that "Each (Hispanic) nationality should be viewed as unique and one should not view all Hispanics as alike." One should not assume, e.g., that Colombians and Cubans "will respond to programs in the same way" (Lee, 1976, pp. 8-9). Nevertheless, Aguero, working with Hispanics in New Jersey who are primarily Puerto Ricans, suggests there are cultural values that could be described as "universal Hispanic values" (emphasis supplied) (1981, p. 6). This appears to be corroborated by the fact that the authors of the "La Tuna" papers, working independently, identified the same values as Mexican.

Aguero spoke of the importance of the extended, as well as the immediate family, and the importance of emotional relationships with warmth and affection openly expressed (1981, p. 6). She explained that the Hispanic family as extended structure included many relatives to whom one could turn for support (1981, pp. 3-4). Barrientos, et. al., speaking of the extended family, explained that it was characterized by psychological and economic interdependence (1979, p. 15). Hamilton, et. al., described the powerful concern of the inmate for his family's welfare (1982, p. 7).

Aguero also spoke of the concept of self-pride and individual worth, side by side with unquestioned authority of the father in a patriarchal framework (1981, p. 6). Barrientos, et. al., citing work by Peck on comparison of Mexican and American value systems, spoke of the concept of "respect", involving "highly emotionalized reciprocal dependence and dutifulness within a firmly authoritarian framework" (1979, p. 17).

Aguero described a mindset that is oriented to present time needs and accepts life as it exists (1981, p. 6; 1980, p. 36). Barrientos, et. al., cited Hereford's studies on cross-cultural comparison of the active-passive dimension of social attitudes, which described Mexicans as more passive, i.e., tending to accept events as determined by factors outside of their personal control (1979, p. 17).

Aguero believes "[t]he Hispanics' difficulty in handling confinement suggests a lack of fit between their culture and the survival requirements of prisons" (1981, pp. 6, 64). She suggests that to the extent programs designed for the inmate population have been applied to Hispanics "without cultural adjustment or additional information understandable in Hispanic milieu, (they) have led to frustration, aggression, isolation, alienation, and suicide" (p. 6).

Both Lee (1976, p. 28) and Aguero (1981, pp. 20-22, 64) describe ways in which inmates' survival in the criminal justice system depends on English fluency and the extent to which they fall short of such fluency. Difficulties involving the language barrier on both verbal and non-verbal levels are set forth in a paper prepared by the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts (1982, pp. 20-23).

In the prison, the most troublesome items for Hispanic inmates, according to their own ranking, related to daily needs, such as food, privacy and medical care, transactions with the parole process, and experiences with the administration and guards involving rules and regulations. By comparison, the inmates found education (including ESL) non-threatening (Aguero, 1980, pp. 78, 83).

Inmates in a County Jail

An insight into the difficulty of teaching ESL to jail inmates is found in materials prepared by the Director of Education for the Essex County, New Jersey, Jail Annex (Marchant, undated). The population served by the ESL program forms approximately 10% of the total population. Although the majority are from Puerto Rico, it includes Cubans and other nationalities. The nature of a jail as distinguished from a prison or penitentiary, is that it generally houses inmates whose terms are less than one year. The average time served in the Essex County jail is well under that period and, as in most state institutions, classroom attendance is voluntary. Therefore, the bilingual education director, whose stated goal is to give the students some basic language skills to improve oral communication in English, advises that the "teaching can not...be compared to that which occurs in a more regulated educational facility." Lesson plans are developed more as flexible guides and are tailored to the individual needs of students in a constantly shifting population.

To summarize, aliens in state facilities are not consolidated into homogeneous groups such as exist in La Tuna and Atlanta. Therefore, at least with regard to New Jersey, the only writings that furnish a glimpse of what is available to aliens in the area of ESL and prison life generally, concern Hispanic inmates.

In her profile of Puerto Rican prisoners, Aguero acknowledges that "[t]he world of institutions is an alien world for most inmates", but suggests that "this feeling is compounded for Puerto Ricans when they are treated as outsiders by members of this alien world. They are made aliens twice over." (Aguero, 1980, p. 79). Aguero's use of the word "aliens" in the Puerto Rican

context may be figuratively correct. In the case of Mexicans, Cubans, and other foreign nationals whose mother tongue is not English, the word takes on a double meaning, involving both legal and cultural alienation.

This appears to be borne out by the statement of Wanda A. Briscoe, Chief of Education, California Department of Corrections, in a letter to the researcher (September 11, 1984), that alien inmates are particularly vulnerable to other inmates, who take advantage of them because of their inability to speak and understand English. As further explained in the "Interviews" section, below, the "other inmates" are most frequently other Hispanics.

RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS

Educational Needs

Neither the federal nor the state prison systems make an effort to maintain separate statistics on the number of aliens, as such, who need or receive ESL. Only in Atlanta, where most of the inmate population are Cuban detainees, would statistics on the total population and statistics on aliens virtually coincide.

A New Jersey official said no one is keeping tabs on aliens, *per se*, or developing programs for them in his state. They get absorbed in the ebb and flow of prison activity. If attention is focussed on any subgroup that needs ESL, it is the "Hispanic" population, which includes both American and foreign nationals (p.c., July 27, 1984).

In general, ESL teachers reported that they did not distinguish among their students on the basis of immigration status, but on the basis of language needs. Therefore, with the exception of anxiety levels, discussed

below under negative motivational factors, they could not readily determine if and to what extent foreign and American nationals had different ESL-related needs.

Funding and Programs Offered

According to a FBP source, money for education is not the problem for them that it is for state and local systems (p.c., July 16, 1984). Congressional appropriations are the primary source for federal correctional education. Profits from prison industries are fed back into the institutions and further help subsidize education. The rationale given is that education and training provide inmates with the necessary skills to work in the industries. In fiscal year 1983, $5,000,000 was generated by prison industry for correctional education (p.c., July 16, 1984). In addition to the above funding sources, La Tuna, Texas, a federal institution, is unique in that ABE in Spanish, which is a pre-requisite for ABE in English and for ESL, is given in conjunction with the Mexican government. The latter supplies all the teaching materials and, until recently, a teacher's stipend (p.c., undated).

The situation is different in the state prison systems. Partly due to a universal overcrowding problem, their primary concerns are security and budget balancing (p.c., July 29, 1984). These competing interests overwhelm educational needs. This is even more the case at the county and local level, which are minimum security facilities and have short-term populations.

All sources emphasized that there is no national uniformity of correctional education programming among federal and state prison systems. According to a source at the Criminal Justice Statistics Association, the FBP operates under an entirely different set of statutes and regulations

than do state prisons. In addition, each state system has its own laws, procedures, and resources. Therefore, two states may have the same educational programs on paper, but one state may not have the means to carry them out. Finally, there is no assurance of standardization even within a single state, with regard to programs and resources (p.c., August 21, 1984).

The major difference between federal and state systems in the area of language instruction is that in federal prisons, ABE is mandatory for individuals who do not test out at a 6th grade academic level. This is significant for non-English-speaking aliens who are, in the main, Hispanic. If they do not test out at a 6th grade academic level on a Spanish achievement test, they must take ABE in Spanish, which is a prerequisite for ESL. (Only potential deportees are exampt; their participation is optional). FBP's policy reflects the belief that education is not only rehabilitative, it is ultimately cost-effective, as demonstrated by its interrelationship with the prison industries.

However, adult inmates in state prisons, according to an ACLU attorney, do not have a right to rehabilitative programs, including education (p.c., August 29, 1984). Although individual states can mandate education programs for inmates, there is no constitutional requirement that they do so. In most state prisons, education programs are not legally mandated for adult inmates. This is partly because states do not have a tradition of compulsory education for adults. According to a New Jersey official, it is also partly because the primary function of prisons is viewed as custody. Therefore, expenses above and beyond security, even when associated with

well-defined and established educational programs, are viewed as luxuries and are the first to go in a budget crunch (p.c., July 27, 1984). This may adversely affect one institution in a state and leave another untouched. One ESL teacher gave an illustration of classrooms being made over into dormitories to cope with overcrowding (p.c., July 30, 1984). Another ESL teacher told of a union-negotiated regulation that required guards to accompany inmates in all their movements, whether internally to prison classrooms or externally to hospitals and court appearances. The law mandated that prisoners be taken to the courts or hospitals, as needed. It did not mandate that they be taken to classes. Therefore, when guards were let go because of budgetary constraints, inmates were unable to attend their ESL classes (p.c., July 29, 1984).

Currently, states are looking to the federal government for substantial support in the form of the Federal Correctional Educational Assistance Act. According to an official of the American Correctional Association, if this legislation (HR 3684, S 265) is passed, it would authorize the Secretary of Education to provide financial assistance to states for the expansion of education programs in state and local correctional institutions, including basic education and bilingual study (p.c., July 24, 1984).

Ethnicity

There appear to be relationships, both positive and negative, between ethnic cultural values and the ability to function in an educational setting. Interviewees generally described Hispanics, who form the largest group of aliens, as highly motivated inmates, with cultural values that esteem education. They were said to be "above-average", in the sense that they are

most respectful to the teacher, and cause the least amount of discipline problems in class (p.c., September 4, 1984). This characteristic seemed most evident in inmates with the strongest and most recent ethnic attachment. Thus, in a Hispanic community in a California institution, consisting of American and Mexican national sub-groups, the Mexican nationals were viewed by teachers as "the best group", most serious about learning and achieving, whereas the Mexican-Americans were less likely to share these values (p.c., October 5, 1984).

At the same time, some interviewees believed that aspects of Hispanic culture wherein the family provides continuous psychological and economic support intensify the alien inmates' sense of isolation and increase the normal loss of self-esteem which occurs in prison (p.c., July 16, 1984, July 30, 1984). This phenomenon would appear to make it more difficult for those alien inmates who are far from their families to function successfully in prison activities, including the educational program.

Although Hispanics in general were described as respectful to teachers and positive in their attitudes towards education and towards learning English, some distinctions were made along national lines, regarding their ability to achieve in a classroom setting, on the basis of socio-economic status and associated educational background. For example, one New Jersey teacher reported that in his experience, "the longer the trip, the more affluent the traveler". Thus, Colombians appeared to be somewhat better off financially than Cubans or Dominicans, generally had at least a high school education in Spanish, and were more adept ESL students. On the other hand, the "Mariel" inmates, who came from a more restricted economic and social background and

with a Cuban history of anti-social behavior, were described as having an extremely short attention span, serious psychological problems, severe culture shock, little self-discipline, and no clear concept of classroom behavior (p.c., July 30, 1984). This impression was echoed by a California teacher who found the Cubans in his class "very difficult to teach, easily provoked, high-tempered, with no regard for the consequences of their actions". (p.c., October 5, 1984).

Finally, the researcher was advised that any ESL teacher in prison should be aware how different national groups relate to each other and to antagonisms between individuals that might arise from these relationships. California officials note that within the Hispanic inmate community there were sharp divisions between Americans of Mexican background and Mexican nationals. The former tended to look down on the latter as less educated in American ways, would not accept them in the "American" group, pressured them for property, and beat them up (p.c., October 5, 1984). Colombians were identified as generally incarcerated for drug-related crimes and, in the interviewees' observations, drug-related crimes generated turf battles over sales territories that might be expected to spill over into the compound and into the classroom. A New Jersey official explained that the problem for the teachers is that they are not likely to know these things in advance, and only become aware of them when an explosive situation ignites or when inmates give them some warning. Ideally, to maintain order, the ESL teacher, when alerted to potential problems of this nature, should try to place mutually hostile inmates in different classrooms (p.c., July 29, 1984).

Student Motivation - Positive Factors

The educators interviewed believed that individual motivation, even more than skills and aptitude, determines the effectiveness of instruction. The motivation of inmates who are functionally illiterate and/or have little or no English fluency, stems from a variety of factors which are further complicated by immigration status in the case of aliens.

Generally, inmates with little or no English fluency seek instruction to enhance their prospects for physical survival, deal with systems and institutions, enable them to acquire vocational skills, and, ultimately, attain their freedom.

Physical survival involves interaction with guards and with fellow inmates. The greater the chances of misunderstanding or being misunderstood, the greater the potential for consequences ranging from minor penalties to violence and injury. Physical survival also encompasses medical care: the prisoner must be able to express his complaints to get proper treatment.

Dealing with systems and institutions involves interaction with authority. Experiences with the criminal justice system at the arrest, trial, and sentence level, wherein the only representative may have been a monolingual public defender, and the court translation facilities inadequate, convinces the prisoner of the need for greater English fluency. What is past cannot be mended, but a desire is generated to participate knowledgably in appeal processes and to make a good impression at parole hearings. Economic rewards are linked to the acquisition of literacy and/or English fluency which may be secondary to the prisoner's major goal of acquiring a trade. At institutions which offer vocational training the learning track may require

that the trainee first complete ABE, if needed, and in institutions that do not provide a bilingual vocational training staff, ESL plays an important part in trainee readiness.

Acquisition of a vocational skill in prison leads to greater job prospects and better pay on release. Prior to release, there are carrot-and-stick economic incentives. An FBP source advised that prisoners may receive increased pay or work and industry assignments which require a certain level of comprehension and communication ability. Conversely, they may be frozen at the lowest pay grade until they complete their educational program (p.c., July 16, 1984).

Aliens are influenced by all the above factors. For example, an official of Unicore, the Federal Prison Industry, stated that no preference is given to Americans over foreign nationals. This means aliens have the motivation for a qualifying education (p.c., August 29, 1984). In addition, aliens have incentives associated with their special legal status. Illegal entry is a felony for which aliens may be arrested, tried, sentenced, imprisoned, and deported upon release. Those intrepid repeaters who wish to be absorbed into the American population have what may be termed a "chameleon" motive. The better their command of English and ability to become indistinguishable from American citizens, the less likely they are to be picked up by INS. Finally, for those who seek to acquire citizenship through marriage, some level of English proficiency may be required to establish a relationship that will lead to marriage (p.c., July 25, 1984).

Student Motivation - Negative Factors

The interviewees believed that there were negative factors which tended to reduce the motivation to learn. Of these, anxiety is considered to be most significant. All inmates experience anxiety. It may stem from loneliness as a result of separation from family, which may be especially difficult in a family-oriented culture, from overcrowding, from racial or ethnic tensions, from bad interactions with fellow-inmates or guards, and from turf battles of various sorts, which carry over from the outside into prison life. In addition, in the case of the alien, immigration status, particularly if there is an INS detainer, can cause extreme anxiety.

A director of orientation in a state prison reported that the day of his conversation with this researcher, he had heard Cubans arguing whether on completion of sentence it was better to go to Cuba, to the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, or commit suicide. In view of this tension, he found that even students who were interested in learning seemed to have a hard time giving their full attention to classroom work (p.c., July 30, 1984). According to an attorney representing the Cubans in Atlanta, the indefiniteness and uncertainty of what is going to happen to them produces a sense of desolation that can surface in a classroom. They may comply with INS requirements to demonstrate achievement in ESL and other programs and still be denied release based on past criminal records. In addition, they are aware of news stories which discuss a possible United States arrangement with Castro that will result in their return to Cuba (p.c., August 30, 1984).

These impressions were shared by an ESL teacher in a state system who found foreign inmates experiencing such a high level of anxiety that they could not function in the classroom without special counseling. She suggested the ESL teacher in a correctional setting should be sensitive to this problem, attempt to learn about INS law as it affected the students, and be available to answer questions such as "What can I expect when I get picked up by INS?" The answers differ based on the inmate's deportability. Cubans would most likely be taken to the federal penitentiary in Atlanta; Colombians would most likely be taken to an airport and sent home (p.c., September 4, 1984).

Teachers of second languages understand the positive value of a student wishing to identify with the culture of that language. According to a psychologist who is one of the authors of the "La Tuna" papers (p.c., September 1, 1984), the Mexican inmate has difficulty in transferring national loyalties. This would appear to be a negative factor in second language acquisition. However, the psychologist corroborated the researcher's impression that this negative factor was more than offset by the powerful survival and economic motives referred to above.

There are also economic disincentives to attend ESL classes which reflect the tension between administrations' budget-oriented goals and educators' goals to help inmates acquire English fluency. A state official observed that Cuban inmates generally have no family to help them out with expenses for radio, TV, food, clothing, and so forth. Therefore, they must work to buy things. They get monetary incentives from the administration for all activities, but some pay more than others. For example, they get three times as much daily pay to work in the kitchen as to go to school (p.c., July 30, 1984).

Another example given by an ESL teacher also involved state prison inmates. If they do maintenance work, such as grounds-keeping, they reduce the cost of institutional upkeep and earn time off their sentence. The administration benefits financially in two ways: it has the use of the prison labor and, overall, the average stay of the inmate population, and thus its cost, decreases. The inmate also benefits in two ways, through receipt of greater earnings and earlier release (p.c., September 4, 1984). Thus, choosing work instead of ESL class rewards the inmate with both pay and freedom.

In the federal prison system, the administration, wherever possible, tries to accomodate inmates in full-time jobs, by assigning them to evening shifts so they can both work and go to class. Even here, however, if there are conflicting demands on the energies of foreign inmates, they will work rather than go to class. According to a source at Alderson Federal Prison, Alderson, West Virginia, the only federal women's prison, about 10% of the population are potential deportees. This means that educational participation, while encouraged, is optional. The deportees have a great interest in ESL, but prefer to spend all available time working in the prison industries. Nationals from South America or Mexico make "good money", in the sense it is more than they would have made at home. Most have dependents, are culturally oriented to maintaining and providing for them, and send hore prison earnings for this purpose. They will not get heavily involved in educational programs that they feel will compromise their provider role (p.c., August 20, 1984). Ironically, then, even the most modest stipends for work in prison may function as a disincentive to education. This is a special case of the work/non-work tradeoff which is postulated by classical economic theory, under conditions of free choice.

One state educator discussed the role of language in defining one's sense of self. He emphasized that language is more than just putting words together. It represents symbols. A Spanish-speaking inmate suffering a loss of self-esteem in prison may find that his language is his final stronghold, the last thing left he can control. In this educator's experience, the foreign inmates, e.g., Cubans, have different attitudes about using the English learned in ESL classes, depending on whether they are dealing with a teacher in a classroom situation or with a corrections officer in a security situation. With the former, they are psychologically open and willing to learn and speak English. With the latter, they may insist on speaking Spanish (p.c., dated). Not all observers shared this impression. An official in the corrections department of the same state did not observe any difference between inmate-guard and inmate-teacher attitudes towards using English. In her view, the inmates try to learn English for survival. If they cannot communicate clearly in all facets of prison life, they are misunderstood and can be punished, even to the point of being denied parole (p.c., July 29, 1984). Other opposing views were expressed by a psychiatric social worker and psychiatrist in Atlanta Federal Penitentiary. They described the Cuban inmates as aggressive, dynamic, and proud, getting great satisfaction from acquiring English fluency and demonstrating it to others. In their observations, the Cubans talked a lot in English to the prison officials, not just to their ESL teachers (p.c., August 23, 1984).

One state official believed there is a direct negative relationship between the number of non-English speaking inmates in an institution who can speak to each other and the desire to acquire English (p.c., undated). This

was echoed by a psychiatric social worker in Atlanta. "If you're among plenty of other Spanish-speaking people, you tend not to learn English so quickly. There is less need to do so." (p.c., August 23, 1984). However, he noted that in Atlanta, this "negative need factor" was neutralized by the critical fact that INS panels required inmates to take ESL and that release could be contingent, in part, on compliance. Another state official believed the impact of a non-English-speaking population, regardless of numbers, was different in a street and a prison setting (p.c., July 29, 1984). Outside, in a large Spanish-speaking community, there would be no strong need to identify with the second culture or learn its language. However, in the prison, the power of the survival factor, in her opinion, overcame virtually all barriers to motivation.

Teaching Methods - Miscellaneous Comments

According to an FBP educator, ESL is not offered in every federal institution. If the institution contains a substantial number of inmates who need ESL, the classes are provided and are generally led by a bilingual teacher. If there are only a marginal number of such inmates, ESL classes are not viewed as cost-effective. Instead, the inmates are absorbed into the ABE-English program. If there is an inmate who is bilingual, he or she may be used as an ABE tutor. Otherwise, pupil and teacher struggle through ABE, using every technique that works, including role-playing, teaching survival vocabulary, and emphasizing listening and speaking rather than reading and writing. The student may participate by asking for the English equivalent of words he realizes he needs to know to survive. Because there is open entry and exit,

depending on sentencing terms, parole, earned time off, and similar factors, the teacher has no guarantee of a stable student body. Therefore, individualized teaching is emphasized even within a classroom context (p.c., July 16, 1984).

In La Tuna, with its large Spanish-speaking population, non-English speaking aliens, on admission, are given an educational achievement test in Spanish. If they achieve above the 6th grade level, they can take ESL. If they achieve below the 6th grade, they take ABE in Spanish. Students in the program do not have access to ESL classes until they have achieved some reading and writing skills in Spanish. Spanish ABE classes are held every day for somewhat over an hour. Instruction is individualized to fit the age and background of the students. There is no formal graduation, but the student gets an ID card with his picture to take back to Mexico, if deported there upon completion of sentence or upon parole. It states the level of achievement reached in the La Tuna classes and acts as a registration card for continued ABE in Mexico. While ABE focusses on reading and writing skills, either in Spanish or English, ESL is primarily conversational. It is optional and, according to a teacher, very popular. There are three 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 hour periods taught every day and there are 12-15 people constantly in each class. Because there is no segregation based on nationality, ESL is not restricted to aliens, but can involve Hispanic-Americans. It is open to anyone who wants to improve his English (p.c., undated).

The education supervisor at Alderson, West Virginia, the federal women's prison, has a daily afternoon time slot for ESL. She does not differentiate between American citizens and aliens, in terms of teaching methods or materials. She speaks only English in class, using bilingual inmates as aides.

This is considered a work assignment, for which the women get paid. They work with their specific national group, because of variations in how different national groups use what is, on its face, the same mother-tongue (p.c., August 20, 1984).

California may be unique in having a statewide official ESL curriculum. Attendance at classes is mandatory. Each inmate must work or study or both for 6-8 hours a day. A classification committee interviews and tests each inmate upon entry and determines the appropriate program. If the tested inmate achieves below 6th grade level, he or she must attend school. According to the supervisor of education in one California institution, each ESL class has a quota of 20 students who take an intensive course of three hours in the morning and 3 hours in the afternoon, 5 days a week. Some inmates who have no other financial resources are allowed to split the day into work, which is remunerated at $40 a month, and classes, which are not remunerated. All teachers are bilingual. However, English is used in class as much as possible and the teachers speak Spanish only when an explanation is needed to get a point across. In California, ABE/Spanish is not a prerequisite for ESL as it is in some federal prisons. Those who are illiterate in both Spanish and English have a difficult time, but teachers use the Laubach method, which allows students to start at "ground zero". They go through the 3rd grade with Laubach/ESL, then they mainstream, i.e., they take ABE/English with the rest of the inmates (p.c., October 5, 1984).

A New Jersey educator informed the researcher that statewide, there is no standardized ESL program or curriculum. She defined the primary purpose of her ESL program to make the student functional within the correctional institution, with the least amount of problems for the inmate and the adminis-

tration. In her view, foreign nationals don't have any unique problems, outside of their immigration status, that would make it necessary to change the ESL programs. She pointed out that even institutions which say they have ESL programs may use this designation for what is really a bilingual program. In ESL, the teacher normally need speak only English. This educator happens to be bilingual and her approach varies depending on student needs. If a student is basically proficient and can communicate at some level in English, she uses bilingual methods. If the student has no proficiency at all in English, she uses ESL methods. In her experience, she found that a bilingual approach worked best with Cubans, who she described as very resistent to having classes only in English (p.c., September 4, 1984).

A bilingual director of education at a county jail, which has the shortest-term prisoners (sentenced for 364 days or less), reported the current average stay is 2-3 months, given time off for good behavior, for work-time, and for pre-trial detention, and liberal parole policies developed partly in reaction to overcrowding. Since stays are so limited, instruction has been designed in self-contained weekly units. Classes are unusally small, consisting of approximately ten inmates, as mandated for security purposes by the prison administration. This educator explained that although he designed ESL classes for his curriculum, due to pragmatic considerations, he has almost totally abandoned them. If a prisoner does not speak English, he will be taught ABE (i.e., some reading and writing skills), in Spanish. If he can speak some English, he will be taught ABE in English. Confronted with an individual who doesn't understand English and is only marginally literate in Spanish, the educator finds it impossible to teach English in the short time available (p.c., July 29, 1984).

Measurements of Success

Although ESL teachers can observe success in the short term, i.e., they can recognize when a student has completed a unit or grade and is ready to move up the educational ladder in prison, they advised the researcher there is no mechanism to measure the success of their teaching after release. This is especially true in the case of aliens.

As one federal educator explained, once prisoners are released to INS, there is no more FBP involvement, so no follow-up inquiries are made (p.c., August 20, 1984). The ESL director of a state system explained that even when efforts are made, follow-up is difficult because inmates do not want to communicate with the prison once they leave (p.c., August 29, 1984). In only two instances could this researcher find evidence of follow-up attempts. One, in written form, deals with Mexican nationals deported following stays in federal prisons, and is found in the La Tuna papers, referred to under Review of Literature, above. The other was reported orally by an ESL educator in a county jail. He works with small groups of students, establishes personal relationships with them, and helps them with continuing education and jobs after release, in effect, acting as a social worker as well as educator (p.c., July 29, 1984). This unique activity reflects an individual rather than an institutional effort and is not recorded or measured. With the exception of the La Tuna investigators, no one contacted by this researcher has attempted to measure the success, in or out of prison, of ESL training for foreign nationals, as distinguished from American citizens.

TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Practitioners do not believe that incarcerated aliens have unique problems in learning language skills, in terms of technical acquisition of knowledge. In this view, ability to learn is generally constrained by the same factors that affect other inmates, primarily their socio-economic and educational backgrounds. However, in this researcher's view, there is reason to believe that immigration status can affect the ability to learn in specific situations.

First, it may contribute to the anxiety level, which can significantly affect both incentive and ability to learn. This can be due to the threat of deportation or the uncertainty surrounding detainment by INS. Or it may be because American inmates, while sharing the same mother tongue as the aliens, may reject or bully them for not having "American ways". Or it may be due to historical antagonisms with other foreign inmates that produce individual friction or group hostility. Or it may be for all of these, or even other, reasons.

Second, to the extent aliens retain a powerful ethnic attachment not present in the institutional environment, it may lessen their desire or ability to identify with the culture of the second language. Acquiring English, in this view, is seen as leading to a loss of group identity. This is a disincentive to learning.

Third, there are economic incentives and disincentives to learning that may be affected or modified by immigration status. For example, some institutions allow inmates to choose whether to work or go to class. Aliens may be far more likely to prefer work to using time for learning, than would be the case if they were not so far from home and cut off from family support and

sympathetic visitors. To an unknown, and perhaps unknowable extent, they may prefer to work, either to earn money for immediate needs, or to send money home for their family, than to attend class.

Some ESL educators, sensitive to the importance of heightened anxiety levels, become part-time counselors or information sources on immigration matters, rather than limiting themselves to their job requirements to teach English. They develop awareness to antagonisms among national groups and try to structure classes to provide the safest, most harmonious atmosphere. They try to understand the cultural values that accompany ethnic attachments. There is little they can do, however, to counter economic disincentives to learning. These may be part of administration policy to help cut down costs of maintaining correctional institutions.

Most prison systems do not perceive a need to identify alien inmates, either from the point of view of security or of education. Nor do they have the capability to confront whatever special factors may constrain learning by incarcerated aliens. There are, nevertheless, powerful positive factors promoting acquisition of English by incarcerated aliens. These are survival in a hostile environment; getting vocational skills and concomitant economic benefits from improved employability; more successful dealings with the criminal justice system, including appeals processes and parole decisions; and "Americanization", where desired. Most educators report that these overcome virtually all negative factors, including the high anxiety levels, difficulty in transferring attachments to the dominant English-speaking culture, and the natural instinct to speak the language that is easiest when there are other fellow-inmates who share the mother-tongue.

Regardless of immigration status, there are very few attempts to do post-release follow-up that could provide useful evidence concerning the outcome of ESL training in prison. In a sense this is a special case of the general problem in doing post-release follow-up, i.e., securing enough observations to lend validity to survey results; providing incentives, financial and otherwise, for reporting by participants, etc. In general, post-release evaluations of correctional programming have been problematic. In the case of aliens, there are additional difficulties because many are deported and the prison system sees no benefit in devoting resources to studying people who are not in or likely to remain in the United States.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Given the dearth of literature on incarcerated aliens, even to the extent of determining their numbers, it might be productive to write a proposal to the National Institute of Corrections, with regard to the 1985 survey to be conducted under their auspices (referred to on page 9 of this paper), suggesting that questions be added to identify foreign nationals as a sub-group of inmates who are non- or marginally English-speaking. One benefit, although not directly ESL-related, is suggested by the cooperation between Mexico and the United States which has resulted in the government of Mexico assuming some of the costs of Spanish-language ABE in a federal prison, in the expectation that more productive citizens will be returned to Mexico. If similar arrangements could be made with other countries, the first step would be to identify the number and type of foreign nationals incarcerated in this country.

A subject for further study is suggested by the difficulties experienced by teachers in short-term facilities, e.g., what is known about short-term ESL instruction in a jail or other institutional context, with specific reference to basic learning packages that are geared to 1-4 weeks total instruction.

Because the La Tuna and New Jersey studies suggest there is a value in sustaining and nurturing the cultural heritage and thus the self-respect of incarcerated ESL students, a question for further research arises as to whether there is an advantage using bilingual and ESL methods with bilingual instructors, rather than exclusively with instructors proficient only in the second language.

One of the authors of the "La Tuna" papers, Dr. Guido Barrientos, at the University of Texas at El Paso, has suggested to one of his students as a subject of research the difficulty in transferring national loyalties as a factor in second language acquisition. Since the likely field of research in the El Paso area consists of Mexican nationals, it may be valuable to do comparable research in another area of the country such as the northeast and Atlantic states, focussing on a different group of foreign nationals, such as Cubans or Colombians.

Another suggested subject for study is a comparison of incarcerated aliens' ESL-related experiences with those of non-incarcerated aliens, including frequency and context of second-language use.

Recognizing the problems of evaluating the effects of ESL in correctional institutions post-incarceration, it might be useful to conduct exit interviews with alien inmates who have taken ESL, prior to release and/or

deportation, and to arrange follow-up interviews with consenting subjects or, in the alternative, mail-in questionnaires for a fee as inducement to cooperate.

Considering the increasing number of people, without regard to immigration status, whose native language is not English and who need vocational training, it should be useful to research what is known about fusing ESL and basic technical or vocational training. Further, since immigration reform was not enacted in 1984, efforts will resume in the next Congress. Amnesty and employer sanctions will continue to be foremost on the agenda. The latter will continue to concern the Hispanic community, fearful of discrimination. It is likely national interest will turn to education and training for the "legalized" alien, as well as for the Hispanic citizen. In this effort, ESL may assume a more central role. Research to support that role should begin now.

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Appendix A

Dear :

I am doing research for a graduate seminar in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) at the University of Maryland. Tentatively, I am trying to identify factors which influence the effectiveness of language instruction (e.g., in the ABE, ESL, GED programs) to incarcerated aliens and determine if any of the factors are unique to that group.

I am interested in how educators approach teaching in a correctional institution that is in any way different from teaching elsewhere, and whether any distinction is made between the types of instruction offered to aliens vs. other inmates.

For the purposes of inquiry, I have assumed that aliens have characteristics and/or problems related to their density in and proportion to the total inmate population, ethnicity, socio-economic background, including educational levels, and legal status, as well as teaching methodology and access to funding, which enhance or detract from the effectiveness of their education.

I have further assumed that the results of an inquiry of this nature would prove useful to education officers in the corrections field, to writers and publishers of their training materials, and to public policy officials whose judgments determine the allocation of funds for correctional education.

I would appreciate any data about inmate population, description of courses offered, methodology (including a description of your textbooks and other training materials), psychological insights, references, or advice you may wish to offer. If you believe there are factors (e.g., gender, maximum vs. minimum security environment) that should also be considered, please let me know.

Thank you in advance for your courtesy.

Sincerely yours,